

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2018



# UNITED CHURCH NEWS

## **A REFRESHINGLY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE WITH REGARD TO DISCUSSIONS OF IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

No one needs me to tell them about all the negative and hateful language being bandied about in public with regard to refugees, immigration, citizenship and even people wishing they held other than US citizenship. None of us has truly clean lips in how we have spoken to or of those with whom we passionately disagree: at UCF we focus on civil discourse, civility and welcome to the stranger, and all those in need of safety, food, education, health care and opportunity. While good, faithful and reasonable people may disagree about goals, policy and means, we at UCF are united in our regard for other human beings, and advocate for and offer respect and justice, as it is within our means. The public debate has made for a discouraging year for many of us – and we seek different ways to respond, according to our passions and gifts. I was offered an unexpected occasion for encouragement this past month.

Sue and I had the opportunity to attend Fulya's naturalization service at the county courthouse. On that day, sixty-one people from thirty-one countries made their vows and received certificates confirming they earned their U.S citizenship. (Actually more people received their citizenship, because any children under 18 who didn't have citizenship had it conferred at the same time.) The courtroom was packed and there was a high level of energy in the room. I noticed only two people who came alone -- perhaps their significant others couldn't afford to take the day off from work. Some were accompanied by family and friends; and some no doubt were refugee resettlement workers who helped them get this far. Some people wore traditional dress; others, work clothes or every day ensembles. I don't know how many languages were being spoken, but I did notice that smiles, "Please", "Thank you", "I am sorry", and "Sshh" were universal. Speeches were made by representatives of the Department of Immigration, the League of Women Voters, and the state, local and national government. (Contrary to tradition, they were all brief and thoughtful.) Some of the speakers had themselves earned citizenship in the recent past. We were reminded that everyone with exception of Native Americans is here because somewhere sometime one of our ancestors was in the same place these people stood; they were welcomed to a land of opportunity and thanked for the blessings they have already brought and will bring to this nation. Each individual citizen was presented their certificate by the judge with a warm welcome and opportunity for pictures. One woman crossed the room and came down the center aisle to receive her certificate, all the while offering a high-pitched call of celebration and joy. The judge dared anyone to "top that." No one else sang, but the joy, celebration and relief was palpable. It was a time to remember what is right with this country and the value of citizenship here.

It didn't make the country perfect, and everything all right, but it was an opportunity to be lifted above the ambient negativity and discouragement; and to hear mutual affirmation instead of denigration and hatefulness. Such things do not negate all the struggles we face, but it reminds us why they are worth facing.

In faith,



Linda



**From the Music Director:**

When our liturgical seasons move from Christmas to Lent and Easter without those few extra weeks we had last year, the tempo of time's march feels sped up - even more than usual. This year, the choir jumped into its first rehearsal of music for Lent in late January.

As much as an 'early' Lenten season puts pressure on ministers and ministries, it always brings me a boost of energy and hope in our Syracuse winter. Because Lent, Holy Week and Easter are such a long and unified season, I cannot help but feel like spring is around the corner everytime I celebrate Ash Wednesday, even if it occurs on Valentine's Day.

I'm sure I mention this every year, but I cannot imagine the seasons of Lent and Easter in another climate. The experience we get to enjoy in the Northeast of penitence followed by resurrection - at the same time as the days get longer and the sun warmer, is one of real joy and renewal, in my opinion.

My thanks to all of you who supported our music ministry in the very busy season of Advent and Christmas from which we've just emerged. The choir and I all appreciate your many kind words of support and appreciation. The choir spends many cold and dark evenings driving to rehearsals and events so that our celebrations are ones that serve the community and our ministry. I'm looking forward to our next season of ministry together, as well as the ever-improving weather and growing daylight.

-Jared Shepard  
Director of Music Ministries

## *We went for water and got food!*

### A New Partnership for our Haiti Ministry

As many of you know, I've been to Haiti four times. This past October one of my goals was to meet with and engage the help of Vibrant Village Foundation of Portland, Oregon in getting potable water to our village of Paulette. VV is a private organization (<http://vibrantvillage.org/our-story>) that donates funds to help developing countries in Africa as well as in Haiti. Originally I was going with Tim S. (Lorraine's son), and his wife Georgette. Due to a medical issue, Georgette and Tim were unable to go. My original job was to be eyes and ears, but now became mouth as well. When Jared heard that I was going alone, he put a post on the Maxwell School electronic bulletin board and within an hour Stephanie S., a grad student and amazing young woman with an ear for French, responded with interest and accompanied me.



"A lunch we observed using tables and chairs donated by UCF at FEED Headquarters. Increased funds from Vibrant Village will now allow FEED to buy more protein like chicken and fish for children's diets instead of just pasta!"

Our meetings with the local organization FEED (Foundation for the Development of Underprivileged Children), our Haitian partners, and Marième D., representative of Vibrant Village, went well, but made little progress towards an immediate solution for the water problem. More study is ongoing because of a number of issues. (Stay tuned!)

HOWEVER, upon my return and with subsequent reports, emails and telephone calls with Marième, Georgette and Tim S., we learned that Vibrant Village was interested in helping FEED and us with a lunch program for our 100 children. Our Haiti Educational Partnership and FEED team tried to provide children a lunch in the past, but we could not sustain this effort, so Principal Serge and the Haitian team would serve some food two days a week using some of their own salaries to do so. As Gloria and I were driving to Florida, a week ago, we learned that Vibrant Village approved the grant and will partner with our Haiti Educational Mission and Ministry team to donate \$24,000 a year to fund lunches! With this money 100 children will go from receiving two meals a week during the school year to five meals a week 52 weeks a year! While we were in Haiti, we noticed that when the orphans knew they would get lunch, understandably, school attendance went up. We know that medical problems due to malnutrition, unveiled by the medical clinic we sponsor, will continue to decrease. FEED volunteers will purchase the food and prepare it for the children!

I've been told that if I had decided to not go to Haiti in October, the above would probably not have happened. We are grateful for God's guidance in all of this, your prayers and donations and of course, our new partnership with the Vibrant Village Foundation!

*By Scott M.*



## The Steeple Coffee House...an invitation!

It's hard to believe that we are in our 12<sup>th</sup> season!!!

The Steeple Coffee House (SCH) is an amazing outreach program of UCF that started when Kim D., Cindy B., John P. and others, had a conversation about building community through music. It started as a once a month program and became, by popular demand, a twice a month program. Musicians seek to play at our venue because people actually come to listen to the music! There are many talented musicians in C.N.Y. John P. regularly receives samples of music from groups desiring to perform at SCH.

We also provide coffee and homemade desserts as part of the \$15.00 or \$20.00 suggested admission fee. Cindy B. coordinates communication to the public; John coordinates talent; and the rest of the team (I and other volunteers) support with chair set up, ticket taking, the kitchen end of things, and generally making sure the attendees are comfortable.



Have you been? If not, it's a great night out and as UCF members you can purchase tickets at a reduced rate on the Sunday prior to the performance. The musicians are paid from the monies received at the door and a percentage goes to the church. UCF has supported the work of many agencies in the greater area through SCH proceeds. From a previous newsletter article by Dr. Even:

*The Board approved SCH's requested distribution. At the end of each season, (three times per year), distributions are made according to the following percentages:*

*20% -F/M Community Outreach Food Pantry*

*20% -Capital Fund*

*5% -Minister's Discretionary Fund*

*40% -Outreach Committee*

*The value of the Coffeehouse to the Central New York music community and its encouragement and maintenance of a wonderful sense of community is priceless. The fulfillment of this hope for its ministry, as well as the provision of funds for helping our neighbors in need is a wonderful gift from God to our church. We are grateful to all those who actively support the Coffeehouse with presence, with labor, with baking and with music.*

So, think about this outreach program. It may be a fun way to participate in supporting the mission of the UCF. You can participate by making desserts (contact Cindy B.), helping with PR, with the set up and clean up after the events, and/or attending and enjoying great talent!

-Janet P.

## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE'S EDUCATION

The Youth/Children's Sunday School classes are back in session for 2018. The Seekers will continue to explore what it means to have faith in today's world with its unique challenges using the scriptures as their text. The younger children will continue to look at God's chosen leaders and teachers from the Old Testament.

We are hoping to schedule another intergenerational game night for February. This has proved to be such a fun night for both children and adults, so if you have not attended in the past, we hope you will plan on attending this year. It's a night of fun games, snacks and Valentine making for our homebound.

The Youth continue to focus on mission. We've proposed a fundraiser for the Matthew 25 farm which will be a Soup and Bread sale in March. The plan is to purchase crops and then go to the farm in the spring to help plant what we purchase.

- Paula M.

**"VOICES IN HARMONY"** is the Theme of the 8th Annual World Interfaith Harmony Assembly at Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas (18 Patsy Lane, DeWitt) Monday, February 5th, 6:30-8:00 PM. Choirs and other Singing Groups, including our own UCF Choir will be featured in this gathering of many faiths that celebrates both the unique qualities of the faiths and all that we have in common as the world-wide human family. The AWIHA is sponsored by InterFaith Works of CNY and Women Transcending Boundaries. Established by the United Nations Assembly, World Interfaith Harmony Week affirms that interfaith dialogue fosters respect and understanding that leads to communities enjoying greater cohesion and working relationships for addressing serious societal concerns. Because of somewhat limited space, additional parking will be provided at Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church with shuttle service starting 5:30 PM. All are invited to attend, including families with children. The program is followed by refreshments and opportunity for fellowship.

## SHARE A MEAL WITH LINDA RESUMES

In order to catch up with folk in ways that simply are not possible in our brief time together on Sunday mornings, I am continuing my experiment with sharing meal times

As we resume our fall programming, Linda is looking forward to sharing meals with you.

**Breakfast at 8:00am or earlier if you wish at Mac's Local Yolk; lunch at Kirby's or King David's at 11:45 am.** (Specify your preferred lunch location.)

Tuesday, February 6, Lunch

Wednesday, February 7, Lunch

Tuesday, February 13, Breakfast

Wednesday, February 14, Breakfast

Wednesday, February 21, Lunch

Thursday, February 22, Lunch

Tuesday, February 27, Breakfast

Wednesday, February 28, Breakfast

Wednesday, March 7, Lunch

Tuesday, March 13, Breakfast

Wednesday, March 14, Breakfast

Wednesday, March 21, Lunch

Thursday, March 22, Lunch

Fulya is handling this aspect of my schedule, so please contact her, if you would like to sign up to meet me for a meal. Please call or email her in the church office (315.637.3186; office@theucf.org)

Looking forward to breaking bread with you.

-Linda

## Music Gifts and Spring Plants for Easter

These offerings to the glory of God are supported by gifts made in honor or memory of special people. Forms are attached to the newsletter and located at the entrances to the sanctuary. Completed forms must be turned in to the church office by Sunday, March 18. Acknowledgements will be listed in the Easter bulletin.

- A music gift of \$10 or more will help to defray the cost of special music and guest instrumental soloists throughout the year.
- Flowering plants make our church beautiful on Easter:  
\$10 donation: Easter lily, tulip, daffodil, hyacinth, or crocus

Plants may be picked up after the Easter service.



## Ushers and Greeters are Needed

We are in need of more volunteers to usher. If you would like to serve, on the average of once a month, please contact me. If I could get at least 3 to 4 couples or 6 individuals that would be wonderful, and make working up the schedule so much easier. Thank you in advance to those who wish to serve.

- Deb D.

## Flowers

If you have someone you would like to honor or remember with the whole congregation please think about giving flowers for our worship service. Please check our bulletin board for dates that are open for you to enhance our service. Thank you, Pamela B.

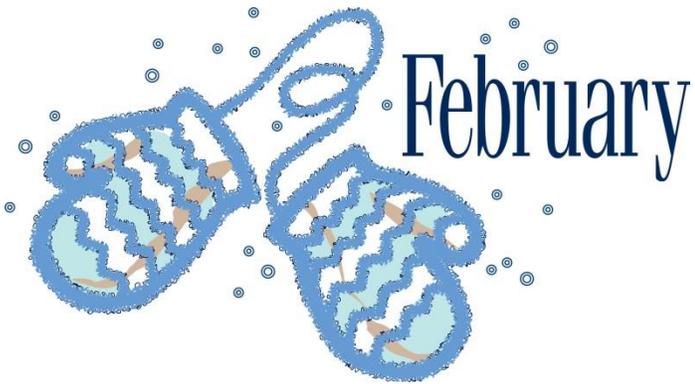
**Congregational Care Committee** will be meeting at 1:00pm on Tuesday, February 20th in Beard Lounge. If you are interested in finding out what all we do to assist our congregation, please feel free to join us! Contact Cindy R, for more information.

## Tabitha Women in February and March

Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00pm Soup, sandwich, and movie night. We will be watching 'Victoria and Abdul'. Bring a sandwich and join us! Soup and beverages will be provided.

Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:30pm Rev. Even will be giving a talk about the Reformation Movement now 500 hundred years old and all the events swirling around at the time enable it to proceed. All women of UCF are invited to join us! Questions? Contact Cindy R.

**Interfaithworks Leadership Awards Dinner (ILAD)** will be on May 1, 2018 this year at the SRC Arena and Events Center at Onondaga Community College. **Congratulations** to Denny Baldwin who will be one of the eight recipients of the 2018 InterFaith Leadership Awards. His volunteer work with InterFaithWorks, refugees and with people "in need" in Central New York continues to help "create a civil community". Denny, is a long-time UCF member and Of Counsel, Mackenzie Hughes. Also to be honored that night will be The Rev. Peter Shidemantle, most famous here for being Lorraine and Erwin Dimon's son-in-law, and is also pastor of the Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church.



**Sunday, February 4**  
**Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**The Lord's Supper**

8:45 am Adult Forum  
8:45 am Bible Study  
9:30 am Choir Rehearsal  
9:45 am Nursery Care  
10:00 am Worship  
10:00 am Children/Youth in Worship  
11:00 am Fellowship



Wednesday, February 7, 2:00 pm – Bible Study  
in Women's Lounge  
Saturday, February 10, 7:00 pm – Steeple  
Coffee House

**Sunday, February 11**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

8:45 am Adult Forum  
8:45 am Bible Study  
9:30 am Choir Rehearsal  
9:45 am Nursery Care  
10:00 am Worship  
10:00 am Sunday School  
11:00 am Fellowship

Tuesday, February 13 –  
7:00 pm – W&SL Meeting

**Wednesday, February 14**  
**Ash Wednesday**

7:00 pm Service in the Sanctuary

Wed., February 15 – 7:00 am Men's Covenant

**Sunday, February 18**  
**First Sunday in Lent**

8:45 am Adult Forum  
8:45 am Bible Study  
9:30 am Choir Rehearsal  
9:45 am Nursery Care  
10:00 am Worship  
10:00 am Children/Youth in Worship  
11:00 am Fellowship

Monday, February 19 – Office Closed for  
President's Day

Tuesday, February 20 – 7:00 pm – Board Mtg.

Wednesday, February 21, 2:00pm – Bible Study  
in Women's Lounge

Saturday, Feb. 24 – 7:00 pm - Steeple Coffee  
House

**Sunday, February 25**  
**Second Sunday in Lent**

8:45 am Adult Forum  
8:45 am Bible Study  
9:30 am Choir Rehearsal  
9:45 am Nursery Care  
10:00 am Worship  
10:00 am Sunday School  
11:00 am Fellowship



**Cancellation Notification Procedure**

*Any delays or cancellations due to inclement weather for Sunday morning activities (choirs, classes and worship) will be made available after 7:30 AM on TV channels 3, 5 and 9.*



*"In Remembrance of Me..."*

# MARCH & HOLY WEEK AT UNITED CHURCH



## **Sunday, March 4**

### **Third Sunday in Lent**

#### **The Lord's Supper**

8:45 am Adult Forum

8:45 am Bible Study

9:30 am Choir Rehearsal

9:45 am Nursery Care

10:00 am Worship (*Children in Worship*)

11:00 am Fellowship

Wednesday, March 7 – 2pm Bible Study  
in Women's Lounge

## **Saturday, March 10 – Steeple Coffeehouse**

## **Sunday, March 11 Daylight Savings Begins**

### **Fourth Sunday in Lent**

8:45 am Adult Forum

8:45 am Bible Study

9:30 am Choir Rehearsal

9:45 am Nursery Care

10:00 am Worship

10:00 am Sunday School

11:00 am Fellowship

## **Sunday, March 18**

### **Fifth Sunday in Lent**

8:45 am Adult Forum

8:45 am Bible Study

9:30 am Choir Rehearsal

9:45 am Nursery Care

10:00 am Worship

10:00 am Sunday School

Monday, March 19 – Deadline for April  
Newsletter

Tuesday, March 20 – 7pm Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 21 – 2pm Bible Study in  
Women's Lounge

## **Saturday, March 24 – Steeple Coffeehouse**

## **Sunday, March 25**

### **Palm/Passion Sunday**

8:45 am Adult Forum

8:45 am Bible Study

9:30 am Choir Rehearsal

9:45 am Nursery Care

10:00 am Worship

10:00 am Sunday School

11:00 am Fellowship

## **Thursday, March 29**

### **Maundy Thursday**

**7pm Service in the Sanctuary**

**The Lord's Supper**

## **Good Friday, March 30**

**12 noon Service in the Sanctuary,  
followed by Prayer Vigil until 3pm**

## **Sunday, April 1**

### **Easter Sunday**

**Celebration of the Resurrection**



11:00 am Fellowship

## Adult Forum News –February & March



Feb. 4th - Humphrey Fellow Nazla Mariza *introduced by Martha K. "Indonesia: Unity in Diversity and its Challenges."*

Feb. 11 - Humphrey Fellow Liva Leipina *Introduced by Martha K. Traditional folklore of Latvia: What's Old is New Again. To understand Latvia, it's best to become familiar with its traditional culture and folklore, which serves as inspiration for young Latvian artists and designers. Old Latvian signs, traditional costumes and rituals are the new trend in this Baltic country. Join Humphrey Fellow Liva Liepina who'll conduct this journey of her country. Liva is a consultant to the State Chancellery of Latvia (Prime Minister's Office) where she is involved with HR development policy and public service effectiveness.*

Feb. 18 - *Adult Forum Resumes February 25*

Feb. 25 - Clearpath for Veterans *Introduced by Bob M. On Church in the World Sunday 2016 a number of folk from UCF went to work on Clearpath for Veteran's golf course. Clearpath is Upstate New York's Veteran Resource Center serving as a hub of information, programs and resources, serving all Veterans and their families. In-house programs and services are diverse and rely on partnerships and collaboration. Clear Path's focus is on restoring, reconnecting and integrating. Our programs and services are innovative, adaptive and flexible to the needs of those who serve. Hear more from Lynn Fox.*

Mar. 4 - Handbell Music Sarah G. and UCF Bell Choir Members

Mar. 11 - UCF History and Archives (Part I of II) *Do you ever ask yourself, "How did we get here?" We're a progressive inclusive community worshipping in a sanctuary built in 1859. How did that happen? Part of UCF's history is our name. Led by UCF Archivist Nancy S. and UCF historian Sue B., we will learn our story begins long before that and is tied into the history of our region and country. Join us to find out what happened, when, why and who was involved. This will be a fast moving trip through a fascinating time and you will have a rare opportunity to see items from UCF's archives. Today, we will explore our two parent congregations (Fayetteville Baptist and Presbyterian) from their beginnings through the 19th century, along with their two nationally known members and one church-splitting controversy.*

Mar. 18 - UCF History and Archives (Part II of II) *Today, we will address these congregations in the 20th century, the merger of two congregations into one; and another "church-splitting event that has formed us into what we are today. Sue B. and Nancy S.*

Mar. 25 - Vanderkamp *Learn more about this beneficiary of the Spring Pops Concert and their expanding ministry from co-directors, Bill and Penny. Introduced by Beth K.*